United Nations E/2002/SR.26

Economic and Social Council

Provisional

15 October 2002

Original: English

Substantive session of 2002
Humanitarian affairs segment

Provisional summary record of the 26th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 16 July 2002, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Buallay (Vice-President) ..... (Bahrain)

Contents

Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance (*continued*)

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02-48437 (E)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Buallay (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance (*continued*) (A/57/77-E/2002/63 and A/57/79-E/2002/76)

Panel discussion on the transition from relief to development in the context of complex humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters

1. **Mr. Brahimi** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan), Panellist, said that Afghanistan was a prime example of a country struggling to move from a situation of humanitarian emergency to relief and reconstruction. When the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan was signed in Bonn, Afghanistan was in a very challenging situation: 22 years of war had devastated its economy, and 4 years of drought had exacerbated the effects of the conflict on the population; up to 60 per cent of the population was dependent on humanitarian aid; the Government which had controlled 90 per cent of the territory was not internationally recognized and, as a result, the United Nations and donors had not had a national counterpart for 5 years; concerns existed over the persecution of ethnic minorities. At that time, Afghanistan represented the world's largest humanitarian programme, with few options to pursue recovery and reconstruction. Against that background, the United Nations was currently developing a number of new initiatives and approaches that endeavoured to build on the lessons learned in other contexts.

2. The United Nations strategy focused on a number of key elements. First, while meeting the most urgent humanitarian needs of the Afghan population of 6 million, it would support and encourage the transition from relief to recovery programming by all international actors. It would also contribute to a shift in focus on the part of the international community from self-regulation to Government capacity-building and ownership. It would then provide support for capacity development of provincial administrations, combined with delegation of programming authority and resources, to allow rapid, flexible and area-specific recovery programmes in the worst-affected areas. It would tie recovery and reconstruction programming closely to the political process to allow all components of United Nations activity to complement each other. There must be a robust and Afghan-centric approach to human rights protection and substantial improvement in the situation of women and girls by mainstreaming gender in all programming and targeting support to women in vulnerable communities.

3. Progress had already been made towards many of those objectives. Refugees and internally displaced persons had returned home in record numbers, much faster than expected; well over 3 million children had returned to school, compared to initial expectations of 1.6 million. Such progress had generated its own challenges: how to help rural communities become viable so that returnees would not gravitate to the cities, and how to ensure that children had decent schools and trained teachers. Surveying and clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance was accelerating, and the transfer of mine action from United Nations management to complete Afghan control was being implemented. Nationwide polio immunization continued, and public works programmes in several cities had begun. Despite huge logistical difficulties, civil service salaries had been paid in most parts of the country. The Transitional Administration would face challenges as it tried to continue paying salaries. An indigenous and independent media had begun to re-emerge.

4. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was working, but it was not yet fully integrated and the differing and sometimes contradictory rules, regulations and cultures of the peacekeeping, political and assistance institutions had not helped matters. The extensive process of reviewing the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme (ITAP) with national authorities had resulted in a more coherent approach, and the ongoing integration of ITAP into the national development framework and budget meant that there was growing congruence of objectives between the Afghan administration, the United Nations and the other partners. Better management and circulation of information remained a major challenge.

5. It was possible to draw some early conclusions and lessons from the first months of the work of UNAMA in Afghanistan. The United Nations was expected to play a key role in post-conflict environments, and in helping governments to reassert their policy-making and coordination roles. It should

combine its capacities in the political, human rights, humanitarian and development fields into a coherent whole. Attempts to carry out integrated interventions in a post-conflict environment were strengthened by clear support and mandates from Member States. The strengthening of the mission's management responsibilities should assist the coordination of international recovery and reconstruction work, and the considerable benefits to be found in joint work by the political and relief/recovery components were already clear. Additional United Nations reform would be needed at the administrative and support levels to ensure that integrated missions had the necessary flexibility to meet their obligations. Donors played a critical role in post-conflict environments and should take a more proactive role in agreeing on strategy, supporting the Government, deciding on donor coordination mechanisms and encouraging agencies to adopt a more cohesive approach. Greater attention should be paid to the importance of non-governmental organizations in situations like Afghanistan, and they should be more fully engaged in strategic and operational planning. Governments and non-governmental organizations should work out new relationships in post-conflict settings.

6. **Mr. Lubbers** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)), Panellist, said that the transition from relief to development was key to the work of his Office. From the beginning of its involvement in a refugee situation, it had an eye on the solution: either repatriation, local integration or resettlement. Its task in Afghanistan was to help the country through a difficult transition, and a simultaneous approach on the humanitarian and development fronts was needed. The new initiative involving former combatants would begin with demilitarization and demobilization and move on to reintegration and rehabilitation.

7. The general approach to refugees could be called "the four Rs": repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Some recent progress had been made in the local integration of refugees, as development assistance focused on refugee areas could benefit the local population as well. In Zambia, for example, refugees were not seen as a burden but as potential agents of development.

8. His Office was working more and more closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in providing for the needs of refugees. The UNDP presence in Afghanistan had been particularly valuable. Currently, about 90 per cent of assistance was in the form of relief and 10 per cent development, but the aim was to reverse those percentages in the near future. The Government still required support and assistance as it gained strength, but eventually it would own the development process. The commitment of bilateral donors, for instance the Group of Eight or the European Union, was essential.

9. Meeting the needs of refugees was key to peace, and without integration, there could be no sustainable peace, as groups with no hope were vulnerable to recruitment by groups wishing to prolong conflict. Instead of being seen as separate, humanitarian assistance and development must be seen as joint ventures.

10. **Mr. Malloch Brown** (Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme), Panellist, said that the United Nations had been on trial in Afghanistan, with the world watching to see if it could operate as a single system. The successes achieved there in a relatively short time had demonstrated that the Organization was capable of coming together to begin building a State under the least promising circumstances. The United Nations system was attempting to determine what were the right institutional ways to bridge the gap from relief to reconstruction but was finding it difficult to be sufficiently flexible.

11. Some preliminary conclusions could be drawn from the experience in Afghanistan thus far. In order to bring the many parts of the system together — peace-building, humanitarian action, development, human rights and return of refugees — coherent leadership at the field level, of the kind provided by Mr. Brahimi, was indispensable.

12. A population emerging from conflict had a list of priorities and demands. In Afghanistan, they included schooling for the children, security and the rule of law, such basic structures of government as a functioning judiciary and a national police force, public services like health care, and abundant employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas. It has been decided that it would be more sensible in the long run to assist the Government in meeting those needs, thereby building the capacity of national and local government, rather than provide an agency response, even though the latter might have been more rapid. The

Government also faced special challenges in reintegrating combatants and repatriating refugees, an exercise which was politically complex, logistically challenging, and potentially destabilizing. Currently there was a sense of passing the baton from the humanitarian agencies to the development agencies like UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and eventually, to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), when the stage of high-cost reconstruction projects would begin.

13. In 2001, UNHCR had understandably overestimated the refugee exodus from Afghanistan; in 2002, it had underestimated their return. Even with excellent planning, it was impossible to fully predict humanitarian emergencies, and a certain shifting of priorities was thus inevitable. Despite pleas for flexible funding, and despite the risks inherent in delaying demobilization, the system did not allow for a common pooling of resources for relief and development. Unlike its partner the World Bank, the United Nations did not possess the financial capacity to lead when speed was of the essence, even though it usually possessed the necessary local experience. The system's funding was organized according to the priorities of partner Governments, and refugee populations were not always high on their list of priorities as expressed in poverty reduction strategy papers, inter alia. He thus wished to reiterate the call for greater flexibility and additional resources.

14. **Mr. Cherpitel** (Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies), Panellist, recalled that the World Disasters Report 2001 had focused on recovery, which was a main element of the transition from relief to development. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies sought to help manage that transition in a manner that better served the victims of disaster and proposed to share experiences in that regard.

15. No sooner had the first earthquake hit El Salvador in 2001 than the Salvadoran Red Cross had activated its emergency contingency plan. Search and rescue teams consisting of some 200 personnel had operated in the most severely affected areas, supported by more than 1,000 volunteers. A preliminary appeal had been launched in a matter of hours, and a plan of action developed within two weeks, the priority being to help respond to the immediate needs of the affected population. Some objectives had nevertheless involved longer-term requirements, including psychosocial support, improved health care at the local level and strengthening the disaster response capacity of both the Salvadoran Red Cross and local communities. Significantly, those objectives had been established with an emphasis on local input, the aim being to shift from immediate response to local capacity-building.

16. Currently, the focus of the International Federation in El Salvador was on development, in particular on programmes to address structural vulnerabilities. Attention was also being paid to possible future calamities. Such a shift to longer-term concerns had been facilitated by a developmental approach to disasters and the organizational capacity to translate such a way of thinking into specific objectives, programmes and plans at a very early stage.

17. Disasters were all too often handled as surprise events requiring special interventions, task forces, separate budget lines and coordination mechanisms. In reality, disasters were often predictable and should be viewed as being situated within the development process as such.

18. The issues surrounding transition from relief to development — and the institutional response to recovery — were rooted in the way the relationship between disasters and development was conceptualized. Comprehensive strategies for simultaneously addressing the immediate needs of disaster victims and the requirements of development must thus be devised. Humane solutions for disaster-affected people did not, after all, require massive funding or sophisticated solutions, but rather must be willing to put people at the centre of disaster recovery.

19. In response to the Venezuelan landslides in 1999, the International Federation had made water and sanitation a priority. The first step had been to provide distribution, the next to ensure regular availability. The approach had been people-centred, with the emphasis on involving the affected communities by having them devise and supervise schedules for drawing water from emergency tanks. The focus had been on enabling people to participate in their own communities rather than on lecturing or managing them.

20. Such efforts did not provide complete solutions, but they did contribute to the re-establishment of normality by creating the conditions under which other partners — such as the United Nations system — could address other important issues at an earlier stage.

21. The experience of Hurricane Mitch had caused the International Federation to rethink its response mechanisms, methodologies and post-disaster work with affected populations. In particular, a Pan-American Disaster Response Unit had been established in Panama to strengthen regional disaster preparedness and response capacity.

22. The value of pre-disaster planning had been revealed in Cuba when Hurricane Michelle — the most powerful storm since 1944 — had struck in 2001. Only five people had died thanks to successful civil defence planning, which had ensured the timely evacuation of some 700,000 people, with the Cuban Red Cross playing a limited but predefined role. Search and rescue and emergency health-care plans had also been rapidly activated. Although preparedness was not a sufficient condition for recovery, it could indeed make a significant contribution. The key to recovery was direct participation by local communities in the identification and implementation of humanitarian and early post-emergency programmes.

23. In the aftermath of Hurricane Keith in 2000, the Belize Red Cross had undertaken advocacy in favour of a more integrated approach to disaster, resulting in improved cooperation with the host authorities. Belize was now better prepared to face the next disaster.

24. The challenges of addressing both emergency needs and development requirements were highly complex, hence the importance of cooperation between agencies and organizations based on comparative advantages. In particular, it was necessary to build risk reduction into development planning, since championing development alone was not sufficient. Development could in fact exacerbate disasters by degrading the natural environment or moving people from quakeproof shanties to quake-vulnerable housing. More resources must also be invested in disaster preparedness. Achieving risk-resilient development policies would take decades, but disasters hit each year.

25. Priority disaster-preparedness measures must include: risk and vulnerability mapping; disaster awareness and education; early-warning and evacuation systems; the stockpiling of relief materials; training in response skills; and planning at all levels to ensure coordination of response. Local capacities must also be strengthened to ensure that communities had the knowledge and tools they needed to articulate their needs and priorities in the recovery phase. Lastly, appropriate financial mechanisms must be created. Donor Governments must devise solutions to the funding gap by developing mechanisms that allowed the rapid disbursement of resources in the immediate post-disaster phase. The issue was not necessarily that of volume, but of flexibility and predictability.

26. Development processes should be planned in such a way as to ensure that they had the capacity to absorb the shock of disasters.

27. **Ms. McAskie** (Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)), Moderator, invited delegations to put questions to the panel.

28. **Mr. Hojersholt** (Observer for Denmark) said that his delegation welcomed the emphasis laid by the panellists on durable solutions, in particular with regard to the reintegration and repatriation of refugees in post-conflict situations. Denmark had recently created a new budget line to support efforts in that connection and had been most recently involved in UNHCR efforts in Zambia.

29. International and regional stability were the key to sustainable reintegration of refugees, as was the smooth transition between relief and development. His delegation welcomed the coordinated and integrated approach adopted by UNAMA, which should be replicated in other complex emergencies.

30. **Mr. Brazhnikov** (Russian Federation) commended the efforts of the United Nations system to help bridge the transition between relief and development in Afghanistan, expressing support for a long-term, stabilizing role for UNAMA. The private sector also had an important role to play in joint ventures with development partners. The Russian Federation for its part had pledged some 50,000 tonnes of grain and was also contributing in the area of road construction and the training of mechanics, health personnel and firemen. Long-term support was also required in the energy sector, given that entire provinces still lacked electricity. Since the international community's humanitarian involvement in Afghanistan was approaching the one-year mark, there was a need to take stock of results before moving to the next phase.

31. **Mr. Bishnoi** (India) requested clarification of the comment in paragraph 69 of the Secretary-General's report (A/57/77-E/2002/63) to the effect that, unless

humanitarian funding increased significantly, transitional activities would need to draw on money from traditional development budgets, and that donors should find better ways of accessing those resources, perhaps funnelling them through the consolidated appeals process.

32. **Mr. Brahimi** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan), Panellist, said that all phases of assistance were crucial in a complex emergency of the type in Afghanistan, which was slowly trying to consolidate a peace expected to remain fragile for some time. Twenty-three years of hostilities had all but destroyed the State and left the people tremendously vulnerable. The aim of the emergency work was to keep the country from sliding back into war, and thus it would have to go on even as reconstruction began. During peacetime reconstruction, schooling and hospital care, which continued as best as they could during emergencies, became long-term enterprises.

33. The assistance programme in Afghanistan would certainly profit from lessons learned during the many years of United Nations humanitarian action in and after conflicts. The integrated approach was being tried in Afghanistan. The Government would gradually be helped to take charge of all the programmes, but for the moment United Nations personnel were really running the programmes for the Government. Mine clearance was a task that the Government might soon take over, and it was hoped that it would also begin to run the human rights commission that had been set up. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNICEF had done wonders to get the current school year started and the expectation was that they would have to do much less the following year and still less the next.

34. **Mr. Backstrom** (Finland) said that, since the United Nations could apparently handle only one complex emergency at a time, he wondered where the funding would be found for other peace-building operations that also desperately required help. Also, he asked what the UNHCR was proposing should be done to put the idea of self-help by refugees into practice.

35. **Mr. dos Santos** (Observer for Mozambique) said that his own country's experience had shown that coordination among international agencies, the host Government, donor Governments and non-governmental organizations was vital if the humanitarian assistance was to reach the needy. Mozambique was an example of coordination by consensus, where the flexible use of funds had worked well. The capacity-building referred to by the UNDP Administrator had always to respond to the expectations and needs of the people if it was to be sustainable and avert a recurrence of conflict.

36. **Mr. Khalid** (Pakistan) asked how prepared UNHCR had been for the sudden massive influx of Afghan refugees from Pakistan into Afghanistan. Had contingency plans been prepared for that and future situations?

37. **Mr. Lubbers** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said, in response to the representative of India, that a resolution, currently being drafted, on the subject of strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance included a provision calling for steps to be taken to ensure that the consolidated appeals process always contained adequate plans to unite relief and transitional programmes. It was common for donor countries to ask which agency had the comparative advantage in a particular activity, but as the staff in the field knew, all the agencies were involved in one way or another in the relief phase, whenever action had to be quick and materials secured immediately. The rural shelter programme in Afghanistan, for instance, was addressing a relief as well as a housing problem. He would suggest that donors should support integrated programmes combining humanitarian, reintegration and reconstruction components. In that regard, he had been heartened to hear about the kind of budgetary arrangements made by the Government of Denmark.

38. Self-help by refugees meant, in the context of repatriation programmes, that the returnees would, under United Nations projects, immediately start to rebuild their homes, repair irrigation systems and the like. In projects in countries of first asylum, the United Nations was advocating the local integration of refugees in remote areas, urging Governments to allow them to begin farming or give them the necessary permits to participate otherwise in the economic life of the area. Governments did not like that kind of project, yet if ministries allocated the needed funds to remote areas they would see a double return on their investment and would become convinced of the potential of self-help.

39. UNHCR was always trying to repeat the enormous success it had had in Mozambique, where it had carried out one of the largest repatriation operations ever undertaken. In the case of Afghanistan, UNHCR had known the numbers of returnees that could be expected from Pakistan but not the speed with which they would begin to return home. It had on the other hand been surprised that so few had as yet returned from Iran. In any case, the repatriation inflow was not a dramatic problem: thus far, 1.2 million returnees from Pakistan had been absorbed within the budget, although perhaps more funds would eventually be needed for rural housing.

40. **Mr. Cherpitel** (Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies), Panellist, observed that Mozambique's comments about capacity-building applied equally to civil society activities. In Somalia, for instance, 47 Red Crescent clinics had been set up, with World Bank funding, all over the country and were the only such example of country-wide assistance. Such a project cost money but not necessarily a huge amount.

41. Regarding natural disasters, he said that in Bangladesh, for example, a Red Crescent early warning system on cyclones and flooding had been in operation for 15 years and was a very efficient, low-cost, civil-society, grass-roots project that had saved many lives.

42. **Mr. Morikawa** (Japan) asked if there was any concerted effort by the agencies involved to establish preparedness projects in countries prone to natural disasters, where such projects would be very important in prediction or mitigation and would facilitate the transition from relief to development.

43. In complex emergencies, it was not uncommon for fighting to continue in certain spots while in others development efforts could be started. He wondered what exactly triggered the start of a transition effort. It might be that coordination by the political departments of the United Nations was necessary.

44. **Mr. Olin** (Sweden) observed that the donor ownership being advocated would require a conceptual change in the capitals which controlled the budgets for the transition programmes in the crisis countries. Transition projects in many cases needed to be financed from development cooperation budgets; and even in Sweden, where both humanitarian and development cooperation budgets were already under one roof, a special task force had to be established to deal with transition situations. Donor coordination meetings had to be held, bringing together both humanitarian and development staff early on in the process. Furthermore, the transition debate could be brought to the operational arena of the development partners themselves. The topic could, for instance, be included in the coordination segment of the Council's substantive session in 2003.

45. **Mr. Schillings** (Netherlands) asked whether the lessons learned in Afghanistan would make that programme a model for future programmes in post-conflict situations.

46. **Ms. Larusdottir** (World Health Organization (WHO)) said that the representatives of development partners with whom she had met recently in Kabul, had all said that the single most important thing the international community could do for Afghanistan in the health sector was to ensure that the funds were forthcoming and to start to build capacity even while delivering health services so that the Afghans could absorb the resources. She had been told that reconstruction and recovery efforts needed to be accelerated, and that decentralization in both health budgets and management support was crucial. The international community must stop focusing on Kabul and begin investing not in hospitals but in mid-level institutions throughout the country. All had agreed that there was still a great need for humanitarian assistance but also that much was already being accomplished.

47. As was common in post-conflict situations, the institutional weakness in Afghanistan limited the ability of the Ministry of Health to influence the formulation of rehabilitation policies. As a result, the donors and the international financial institutions had wide room for manoeuvre but there was an accountability problem. The choices made regarding the volume of aid, its channels and targets would shape the future health system, yet the actual running of the system would eventually fall on the shoulders of the Government. It was essential to create a system that the Government could afford in the future.

48. **Mr. Graisse** (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme (WFP)) recalled that in the mid-1990s the Programme had been well financed for emergencies and protracted relief operations but not for development operations. In 1998 the Executive Board had decided to divide its operations into three

categories: emergency, relief and recovery, and development. The relief and recovery category, after a slow start, was currently the best funded and had extensive operations, for example in Cambodia, Mozambique and Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the Programme had been present for more than fifteen years, providing both relief/recovery and development activities adapted to a changing situation. Valid and well conceived programmes in all three categories were generally well received and well funded.

49. **Mr. Cherpitel** (Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies), Panellist, in response to the representative of Japan who had asked about preparedness projects, stressed the importance of involving civil society in planning, and said that disaster preparedness plans had been developed in many countries in coordination with UNDP, which worked closely with Governments, while the International Federation worked closely with local government. He stressed that both Governments and non-governmental organizations must be more proactive in disaster preparedness planning.

50. In response to the representative of Sweden, he emphasized the importance of building the capacity of the International Federation's local societies. In five countries, including Sweden, a tripartite advisory group had been created with representation from the Government, the International Federation and the National Red Cross Society, in order to focus efforts on local capacity-building. With regard to availability of adequate funding, he said that the International Federation had created two funds: the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, a revolving fund replenished through appeals which could rapidly provide up to 5 million Swiss francs; and a Capacity-Building Fund for small projects which could provide approximately 100,000 Swiss francs for investments in countries over a period of three to four years.

51. **Mr. Brown** (Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme), Panellist, said, with regard to post-conflict situations, that the most important lesson learned from the highly successful experience in Mozambique had been the crucial role played by the local government, which had displayed the political will to focus on priorities and ensure capacity-building, training and human resources development, despite limited capacity, as part of an organized strategy. It had shown the necessary determination to overcome obstacles, for example with regard to the reintegration of former combatants.

52. Turning to the area of funding, he said that although more resources were currently available in the relief continuum, it was also essential that there should be flexibility in the use of those funds so that they could be used to promote development. Rather than simply reacting to events, it was necessary to be proactive and undertake activities with high political impact in critical areas which would promote peace and avoid war. Donors should be ready to provide funding first and ask questions later.

53. **Mr. Lubbers** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), Panellist, in response to the representative of Japan, said that the transition process was triggered by the decision to begin repatriation of refugees once security concerns had been addressed and there seemed to be the beginnings of peace. As the numbers of returning refugees increased, repatriation was accompanied by reintegration, followed by rehabilitation and reconstruction. Repatriation efforts should be coordinated with the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations whose responsibilities included assisting repatriated refugees to play a role in rebuilding society and contributing to sustainable peace.

54. The World Bank had shown leadership over the past several years, becoming increasingly active in post-conflict situations at a time when the governments of receiving countries were assuming increasing ownership for recovery efforts. In that context, he expressed doubts about conditionalities imposed by donors relating to good governance, promotion of democracy, and the like, which, while well intentioned, expected too much of Governments that were struggling to rebuild their country. The World Bank had been forward-looking in showing a readiness to provide credits and grants to serve as seed money for peace.

55. The international community's efforts did not always succeed. In Eritrea, for example, despite generous support, efforts had concentrated on the reintegration of former combatants, rather than of all refugees. The consolidated appeals process for Afghanistan had not been easy either. It was often difficult to know how to present the relationship between early repatriation and rebuilding. Most donors

strictly separated humanitarian assistance from development aid, and thus the international community had to deal with separate donor bureaucracies when it presented joint programmes. Often it was difficult to know to which donor bureaucracy a specific request should be addressed. Donors also sometimes seemed confused about which organizations they should address when providing funding. He suggested that they should support transition efforts by identifying which organizations had a comparative advantage, in other words, had the best chances for undertaking successful programmes. In a refugee situation, funding might first be directed to UNHCR then channelled to other organizations and programmes with a view to ensuring a seamless transfer to reintegration and rebuilding.

56. **Ms. McAskie** (Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Moderator, with regard to funding, said that just as institutions and organizations had had to rework their programmes and structures to ensure the transition from humanitarian assistance to recovery and development, funding mechanisms would likewise have to be reworked. The proposal in the report of the Secretary-General to have transitional funding from development budgets through the consolidated appeals process was only one option.

57. In response to the representative of the Netherlands concerning lessons learned from the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme (ITAP) for the Afghan People, she said that a clash of cultures had been revealed, and UNDP and OCHA were working together to review that experience and propose solutions. On the subject of disaster preparedness, she said that it was nearly impossible to predict accurately all disasters or prevent them. The human consequences of such disasters could however be prepared for, and the task of the international system was to support governments in reducing the effects of those disasters. The role of her Office was to ensure an initial response to emergency situations in cooperation with Governments and then to coordinate with UNDP, which focused more on capacity-building.

58. As to what triggered the transition to development, she said that peace and stability, even when fragile, were essential. The level of integration of missions was determined by the degree of stability. The most integrated mission to date was in Afghanistan, followed by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) where there had been good integration at the top along with fully integrated but still flexible coordination of humanitarian assistance as required by emergency situations. There had been close cooperation within the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), but there had not been full integration because peace had not been restored.

59. Summing up the panel discussion, she said that the United Nations must reform itself in order to play the role expected of it by Member States. Over the past 10 years the emphasis had moved from responding to humanitarian crises to providing humanitarian and development assistance taken together, which showed a new maturity in the Organization's efforts to deal with problem situations, including transitional situations. Traditional humanitarian and development coordination instruments were being broadened to include all spheres of United Nations activity and it was essential that coherent leadership be ensured in the field.

60. Governments bore the greatest responsibility in development efforts and required support for capacity-building in transitional situations. They were trying to respond to crises and rebuild their countries at the same time, and it was therefore essential that the international community should implement well-conceived programmes which involved long-term planning, including disaster mitigation, took into account environmental concerns and did not interfere with local coping mechanisms. Donors should not only provide funding but allow flexible use of those funds in the context of coordinated policy frameworks intended to further the transition agenda. In addition to donors and governments, civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations, and the private sector must be closely involved in humanitarian and development activities; in the case of disasters, for example, representatives of the local Red Cross or Red Crescent societies were always first on the scene. New models for action must also be developed by all stakeholders. At Headquarters, the driving force for a fully integrated approach for political, peacekeeping and humanitarian activities, in both crisis and transition situations, was the Secretary-General himself.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.